Contrary to what is being said, there will be no incinerators and no burning of any material whatsoever at Laurel Heights, and therefore no smoke and no smokestacks. Also, there will be no "toxic waste dump" and no "animal testing lab," although some research there will utilize small animals such as mice and rats.

The building will not look like a factory; indeed, the physical changes will hardly be discernable from what you see now, except for the roof, and we will continue to enhance the landscaping.

Will we be polluting the neighborhood with toxic waste, carcinogens and radioactive materials?

Not at all.

Our best proof of that is our track record on our Parnassus campus, where we have been conducting this type of research for more than three decades in amounts ten times as much as is planned for Laurel Heights.

We conducted several studies in the past few years of samples taken on the perimeter of the campus and could find absolutely no appearance of any dangerous chemicals and no sign of radioactivity above the "background" level in the areas around the campus, upwind or downwind. Further, there was no increase from the same testing done two years earlier.

"Background" refers to the amount of radioactivity normally in the air from concrete buildings, cosmic rays and even people. In San Francisco it is half of what it is in Denver and one-fifth of what it is in an airplane.

I have to remind you that the dean of the School of Pharmacy is a former head of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and the faculty include world experts in dealing with, and correcting, the problems of toxic materials and waste. Indeed, the State is using some of our faculty to help solve California's toxic waste problems created by industry and agriculture.

The chemicals themselves are used for research purposes in small amounts. Some are substances labeled "toxic" or "possibly carcinogenic," but in most cases they are such household items as acetone, used to remove fingernail polish, and ammonia, used practically everywhere to clean the floor. They are purchased and delivered in small amounts and are used in procedures that are carefully regulated and monitored.

About "radioactivity" — we are not talking about a nuclear plant at Laurel Heights but about using radioisotopes as tracers to track the passage of drugs through the body. These are used in biomedical research everywhere in extremely tiny amounts, much less than is used by community hospitals every day in the diagnosis and treatment of patients.

Even so, before we bring such materials into the building, we would have to have in place appropriate working facilities and a small storage area and a special license granted for their use.

As for putting toxic materials into the atmosphere — any infectious agents and designated carcinogens used will not be vented at all. They will receive special handling and will be captured by filters inside the fume hoods and packaged, sealed and transported, according to university and state and federal regulations, by licensed contractors.

The rest of the volatile materials, which will be vented through fume hoods, will be safely discharged into enormous quantities of fresh air. The dilution factor is so great that these discharges willl not alter the detectable level of such materials already in the air, arising from automobiles, industrial and even home activities.

Finally, there is the question of whether or not we communicated enough with the neighborhood, as our planning process for the use of Laurel Heights developed over the course of the year.

All I can tell you on this is, we certainly tried.

Since February, 1985, when we finalized the purchase of the Fireman's Fund building, we have communicated in 35 letters, notices, informal discussions, public meetings and meetings of the Campus Planning Committee, which is composed of representatives of all the neighborhood organizations we could locate.

We also used publicity and advertisements in the Sunday Examiner-Chronicle and the Progress to invite people to the meetings, as well as this "Letter to our Neighbors," which goes to 10,000 mailboxes in the Laurel Heights area every other month. Several thousand of the area residents also receive our "Letter from the Chancellor" newsletter, in which we reported details of the plans as they moved forward. Attendance at the public meetings ranged from 35 to 100. The Campus Planning Committee is small, but written minutes of those meetings were mailed to both the representatives and the presidents of the neighborhood and merchants' groups, so that they could report back to their organizations' entire membership.

The draft Environmental Impact Report was provided to 223 individuals, groups and agencies — including the SF City Planning Department, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the administrator of Region 9 of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) — for review and comment over a period of 45 days. The final EIR incorporates all these comments plus the campus responses, mitigations and modifications of the original plans.

From the beginning we described our use of Laurel Heights as a mix of academic and administrative programs with, possibly, a small space for special clinical programs, and subject to an academic planning process which would determine the eventual programs which would move.

Apparently, we did not make it clear enough that "academic" includes a mixture of teaching and research. As our plans for the specific use of the building developed over the course of the year, in consultation with our own faculty, it was apparent that the best possible use was to move the academic basic science programs of the School of Pharmacy. Each step of the way we communicated the type of the research and the kinds of laboratories at the public information meetings, to the Campus Planning Committee and in their minutes.

On June 12 a special public information meeting was held after the official environmental impact review process had closed. At this meeting, and in a few letters which have come to me since then, it was requested that we reopen the EIR process. After reviewing the entire process carefully, I have decided that we will go forward with our Final EIR, and I have therefore sent it on to the UC Regents for consideration at their July 17 meeting.

This is because I believe that our public information process was more than adequate; that we have made significant changes from the original plans for the use of the facility in response to concerns expressed by neighbors during the process; and we are certain that the School of Pharmacy research programs we plan to move to Laurel Heights constitute no health danger whatsoever.

If you were present June 12 at the special public meeting, you will have heard the invitation of Dr. Reynold F. Brown, the head of our Environmental Health and Safety office, to make an appointment by calling 476-3026 to visit our campus and see for yourself how we work in our laboratories and what kind of safety measures are observed.

I repeat the invitation.

Sincerely yours,

Julius Krevans

Julius R. Krevans, M.D.
Chancellor

UCSF
University of California, San Francisco
...A Health Sciences Campus

Special Issue

To our neighbors

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To our neighbors

June 20, 1986

Dear neighbors,

As most of you are aware, a group of residents in the Laurel Heights area are expressing concerns about the plans of the UCSF School of Pharmacy to move its basic science academic programs into our Laurel Heights facility.

Their objections are based mostly on fears that the presence of these programs will be a danger to the neighborhood, and will turn this beautiful building into a "factory" that could destroy property values.

They also are claiming that we failed to inform the neighborhood adequately of our plans for Laurel Heights as they developed over the past year and that, as one neighbor said to a newspaper reporter: "They say a lot of nice things and do what they damn well please."

None of this is true.

I am therefore making use of this special issue of our "Letter to the Neighbors" to set the record straight.

I'll take the last point first. We DID listen to neighborhood concerns, and we HAVE been responsive.

The plans outlined in the Final Environmental Impact Report — which I have sent on to the UC Regents for consideration at their July 17 meeting — include a large number of significant changes from plans outlined in our draft Environmental Impact Report, changes which we made in response to concerns expressed in numerous consultations, communications and meetings with the community.

These include:

- A revised engineering plan which will reduce the height of the "stacks," which are exhaust vents, to approximately the height of the mechanical penthouses already in existence on the roof and adjacent to them. New air supply ducts will be laid horizontally and will be approximately four feet high and set back from the edge by about 15 feet.
- Elimination of a plan to add parking places by paving over some of the lawn on the east border and create a dock for receiving equipment and supplies there. Instead, on the east (Presidio) side, the existing landscape, lawn and trees will be preserved and enhanced, as elsewhere on the site. A tastefully designed sign at the corner of Presidio and Pine will identify the site as "UCSF-Laurel Heights."
- Deliveries will be split between vehicles going into the Presidio Street garage and the California Street entrance, divided between the two entrances. It is estimated there would be no more than 30 deliveries daily of all supplies.
- Traffic routes will be designated for all UCSF vehicles to avoid left-hand turns off Presidio onto the site, and consultation will continue with city officials on how best to prevent traffic disruption in the area.
- The campus has pledged to maintain the amount of parking on the site at no less than 515 spaces. There is no plan at this time for providing more parking areas.
- The campus has asked the Bay Area Quality Management District to conduct baseline monitoring of the site area prior to occupancy of the building and to establish monitoring procedures thereafter.

(continued inside)